

## ANNOUNCEMENT OF FEDERAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Federal Agency Name(s): National Ocean Service (NOS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce

Funding Opportunity Title: Marine Debris Prevention and Outreach Partnership Grants

Announcement Type: Initial

Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-NOS-ORR-2010-2002156

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 11.463, Habitat Conservation

Dates: Full proposals must be received and validated by Grants.gov, postmarked, or provided to a delivery service on or before 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on February 18, 2010. Please note: Validation or rejection of your application by Grants.gov may take up to 2 business days after submission. Please consider this process in developing your submission timeline. Use of a delivery service must be documented with a receipt. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

Funding Opportunity Description: The NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP), mandated by the Marine Debris Research, Prevention and Reduction Act in 2006, has a lead role in addressing marine debris affecting the marine environment and navigation safety in the United States. The MDP defines marine debris as any persistent solid material that is manufactured or processed and directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, disposed of or abandoned into the marine environment or the Great Lakes. The MDP conducts reduction, prevention, and research activities, as well as supports grants, partnerships, cooperative agreements, and contracts to address marine debris. It has held regional, national, and international workshops and an information exchange forum, and established an interactive website ([www.marinedebris.noaa.gov](http://www.marinedebris.noaa.gov)) which includes a nation-wide web educational campaign.

The MDP invites the public to submit applications requesting funding to establish multi-year national and regional partnerships focusing on utilizing existing networks and expanding on existing resources to address marine debris through prevention, education, and outreach activities, and the dissemination and/or development of tools to support these activities. Partnerships are expected to catalyze the public or a target audience to address marine debris in a way that will benefit living marine resources and/or navigation safety. NOAA envisions working jointly on such partnerships through its Marine Debris Program to identify, evaluate, fund, and administer projects that address marine debris and help to restore NOAA trust resource species and habitats. This document describes the types of marine debris partnerships that NOAA

envisions establishing, portrays the qualities that NOAA has found to be ideal in previous partnerships, and describes criteria under which applications will be evaluated for funding consideration. Partnership applications selected through this announcement will be implemented through a cooperative agreement, and will involve joint selection of any multiple marine debris projects funded as sub-awards made through the partner organization. Funding requested to establish partnerships in FY2010 is expected to be greater than funds available for this purpose and the selection process is anticipated to be highly competitive. Funding of up to \$500,000 is expected to be available to establish marine debris partnerships in 2010, and annual funding is anticipated to maintain them for up to 3 years duration. Typical partnership awards will range from \$20,000 to \$150,000 per year. This is not a request for individual project proposals addressing marine debris, rather it is a focused effort to establish partnerships between the applicant and the MDP that will lead to joint projects addressing marine debris prevention and outreach.

Funding is contingent upon the availability of Fiscal Year 2010 appropriations.

## FULL ANNOUNCEMENT TEXT

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

#### A. Program Objective

The principal objective of these NOAA Marine Debris Prevention and Outreach Partnership grants is to provide Federal financial and technical assistance to organizations that have the capacity and expertise to identify, evaluate, fund and administer marine debris prevention and outreach projects across a range of scales that meet NOAA's mission to restore marine and coastal habitats, and support formal and informal education at all levels.

#### B. Program Priorities

Through this funding and request for partners announcement the NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP) will address three of its Program Goals: Prevent and reduce the occurrence and impacts of marine debris; Develop, use, and disseminate tools and products to improve efforts to address marine debris; and, Encourage changes in behavior to address marine debris. It should be noted that removal and research projects are not solicited under this call. Through prevention, education and outreach activities, NOAA and partners aim to limit the increase of marine debris in the world's oceans. Prevention, education and outreach activities are needed at all levels, from children and adults living in non-coastal areas, to beachfront home owners and those who depend on the oceans for their livelihoods. Outreach and education are vital to the success of the MDP mission, to impart key messages and information to audiences through effective and targeted strategic campaigns.

The program priorities for this opportunity support NOAA's Ecosystems Mission Goal to protect, restore and manage the use of coastal and ocean resources through ecosystem-based management. Through this opportunity, the program strives to demonstrate meaningful, measurable, and sustainable ecological benefits to coastal and marine resources by reducing the amount of marine debris in the marine environment through prevention and education/outreach. The program aims to strike a balance between strong national and regional partnerships and seeks to involve diverse constituencies across a broad geographic region to address marine debris through methods that benefit living marine resources and navigation safety.

This opportunity also supports the NOAA mandate to conduct, develop, support,

promote, and coordinate formal and informal education on all levels to increase public awareness about ocean, coastal, Great Lakes and atmospheric science and stewardship.

## 1. Desirable Partnership Qualities

Selected partnerships are expected to be well-rounded with respect to benefits, sound science, accountability, cost-effectiveness and other qualities. Partnership applications that incorporate a combination of the factors identified below will be given higher priority for funding consideration.

- Partnerships featuring an established network to effectively advance the vision of protecting living marine resources, enhancing ocean stewardship, reducing marine debris through prevention and outreach/education, and support NOAA's ecosystem mission goal.

- Partnerships that address under-served or under-represented regions and communities.

- Partnerships that propose a competitive mechanism or similarly rigorous process for any sub-awards to direct funding to highly qualified projects.

- Emulation of the MDP's evaluation criteria for individual projects, based on NOAA standard criteria common to all its competitive grant programs, so that joint project evaluation will be relatively consistent for NOAA across a wide variety of partnerships. The five standard NOAA criteria are 1) importance and applicability of proposal; 2) technical and scientific merit; 3) overall qualifications of applicants; 4) project costs; and 5) outreach, education and community involvement.

- Inclusion of quantitative performance measures for monitoring purposes.

- Provision of information on individual project accomplishments to allow for robust project tracking, evaluation of performance measures, and identification on the MDP website ([www.marinedebris.noaa.gov](http://www.marinedebris.noaa.gov)).

- Partnerships able to provide cash match for project implementation funds at the national/regional level, before local contributions for specific projects are factored in. Providing cash match at the national/regional level for project implementation and a 1:1 match overall (required, see section III. B.) will enable a greater number of jointly evaluated and recommended marine debris projects to be implemented.

## 2. National and Regional Marine Debris Partnership Goals

NOAA is interested in developing multi-year national and regional partnerships that will lead to the reduction of marine debris in the marine and coastal environments through the implementation of prevention and outreach activities. The primary goals of NOAA in establishing these partnerships are to use existing partnerships and networks to further the work of the MDP in preventing and educating the public about marine debris through: dedicated prevention activities including, but not limited to, education and outreach, use of social media, alternative disposal methods, and the development and dissemination of tools and innovative products to address marine debris. These goals will be achieved through increased involvement of organizations, industry, and/or communities in preventing marine debris; development and maintenance of long-term, on-going working relationships of mutual benefit by partnering on activities where the priorities and goals of partners overlap; combining resources with national and regional partners to increase the geographic scope and rate at which marine debris prevention activities can be conducted; and collaborating on project identification, development, and selection for funding with partners that are able to coordinate and manage most or all aspects of these activities.

Successful applicants will be those whose partnership proposals are broad-reaching and demonstrate the potential for significant benefits to living marine resources across a large geographic area and/or according to a publicly vetted, prioritized regional plan or similar document to accomplish coordinated, strategic implementation of individual projects. Applicants seeking to establish partnerships will need to demonstrate that marine debris activities will be consistent with MDP priorities and goals outlined in this notice. Applicants should also note that the following activities will not be considered under partnership awards: (1) Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state or federal law; (2) activities that constitute restoration for natural resource damages under federal, state or local law; and (3) activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute or regulation.

Proposals for both national and regional partnerships are encouraged. Applications for regional partnerships should include goals and objectives that accomplish a rise in marine debris prevention and/or outreach, and whose activities are expected to take place across a substantial and defined geographic region, such as the Chesapeake Bay watershed or the states that border the Gulf of Maine or the Gulf of Mexico and/or will work within a prioritized framework to implement projects of greatest benefit in a comprehensive, effective strategic fashion.

### C. Program Authority

The Administrator is authorized under the under the Marine Debris Research, Prevention, and Reduction Act (MDRPR Act), 33 U.S.C. 1952, to provide grants and cooperative agreements to address marine debris.

## II. Award Information

### A. Funding Availability

Total anticipated funding for all partnership awards is approximately \$500,000 and is subject to the availability of FY 2010 appropriations. Annual funding is anticipated to maintain partnerships for up to 3 years duration, but this is dependent upon the level of funding made available by Congress. Funding for subsequent years will also depend on the ability of partners to successfully perform partnership activities as stated in their applications. Multiple awards are anticipated from this announcement. The anticipated federal funding per partnership award (min-max) is approximately \$20,000 to \$150,000 per year. The anticipated number of partnerships ranges from one (1) to ten (10), approximately, and will be adjusted based on available funding. NOAA will not accept proposals with a single year budget under \$15,000 or over \$175,000 under this solicitation. Applicants can request increases to continue scaling up partnership activities in subsequent budget periods to a limit of 10% per year, however annual funding levels and any increases over FY 2010 levels for successful applicants will be dependent upon partnership success, regional priorities, and the level of funding provided by Congress in the future.

In accordance with the NOAA Marine Debris Program Grant Program Guidelines published on December 21, 2009 in the Federal Register, the NOAA Marine Debris Division Chief (Chief) will determine the proportion of funds available to the MDP on an annual basis that will be obligated to national and regional partnerships each year.

The number of partnership awards to be made as a result of this solicitation will depend on the number of eligible applications received, the amount of funds requested for initiating partnerships by the applicants, the merit and ranking of the proposals, and the amount of funds made available to the MDP by Congress. NOAA anticipates that between 1 and 10 awards will be made as a result of this solicitation.

There is no guarantee that sufficient funds will be available to initiate partnerships where funding has been recommended, and the number of national and regional partnerships established will be up to the discretion of the Chief. The exact amount of funds that may be awarded to work within a marine debris outreach partnership will be determined in pre-award negotiations between the applicant and NOAA representatives, and multi-year funding requests are expected to be funded incrementally on an annual basis. Publication of this document does not obligate NOAA to establish any specific partnership proposed or to obligate all or any parts of the available funds for partnership activities.

#### B. Project/Award Period

Applications for national and regional partnerships should cover a project period between one and three years. Multi-year partnership requests are expected to be funded incrementally on an annual basis. Once awarded in FY 2010, multi-year partnerships will not need to compete for funding in subsequent years. The intention of the MDP is to attract and maintain partnerships that will be ongoing and long-lasting; established partnerships are expected to continue through the duration of the award period. If an application is recommended and approved for funding under a partnership, NOAA has no obligation to provide additional funding in connection with this partnership in subsequent years. A recommendation to the NOAA Grants Management Division (GMD) to continue an award for a partnership in subsequent years, or to extend the period of performance, is at the total discretion of the NOAA Marine Debris Division Chief. Permission to extend the period of performance beyond that stated in award documentation is at the discretion of NOAA and should be requested in writing at least 60 days in advance of an award's expiration date.

Future opportunities for submitting proposals to the competitive process for developing multi-year, national and regional marine debris prevention and education partnerships are anticipated, but will be dependent on MDP funding levels and on the performance of existing partners to successfully conduct partnership activities to identify, develop, evaluate, implement and monitor marine debris projects.

The earliest anticipated start date for partnership awards will be August 1, 2010. Applicants should consider this date when developing plans for initiating proposed partnership activities.

### C. Type of Funding Instrument

Proposals selected for funding will be funded through a cooperative agreement

under the terms of this document. For applications funded through cooperative agreements, substantial involvement of the federal government may include, but is not limited to, activities such as assisting national and regional partners to promote locally driven marine debris activities; cooperating with partners in project identification, evaluation and selection; conducting site visits, as appropriate, and evaluating the performance of individual projects sub-awarded through partnerships; supporting project partners to enhance their effectiveness in meeting stated marine debris-related goals for improving living marine resources, including assistance with the development of appropriate monitoring to ensure a basic level of assessment of project success; collaborating on the improvement of existing, and/or development of new performance measures to gauge project outcomes; and involvement in public events to highlight project activities.

## III. Eligibility Information

### A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, hospitals, other non-profits,

commercial (for-profit) organizations, Regional Fishery Management Councils and Commissions, organizations under the jurisdiction of foreign governments, international organizations, state, local and Indian tribal governments whose applications propose to benefit NOAA trust resources. Applications from federal agencies or employees of federal agencies will not be considered. Federal agencies are strongly encouraged to work with states, non-governmental organizations, national service clubs or youth corps organizations and others that are eligible to apply.

The Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

(DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to broadening the participation of Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities in its educational and research programs. The DOC/NOAA vision, mission, and goals are to achieve full participation by Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) in order to advance the development of human potential, to strengthen the nation's capacity to provide high-quality education, and to increase opportunities for MSIs to participate in, and benefit



from, Federal financial assistance programs. DOC/NOAA encourages proposals for innovative national and regional partnerships involving MSIs according to the criteria in this document, to strengthen the capacity of MSIs to foster student careers, research and workforce competitiveness in addressing marine debris through identification, development, implementation and monitoring of marine debris projects on a national or regional scale.

#### B. Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement

A major goal of the MDP is to provide seed money to partnerships that leverage

funds and other contributions from a broad public and private sector to implement

locally, regionally or nationally important activities to benefit living marine resources and navigation safety. To this end, the MDRPR Act requires applicants to demonstrate a minimum 1:1 non-Federal match for MDP funds requested for the proposed partnership. In addition to formal match, NOAA strongly encourages applicants to leverage as much investment as possible.

However, the MDRPR Act allows the Administrator to waive all or part of the matching requirement if the applicant can demonstrate that:

- 1) no reasonable means are available through which applicants can meet the matching requirement and

- 2) the probable benefit of such project outweighs the public interest in such matching requirement.

In addition, the MDP may waive any requirement for matching funds by an Insular Area (Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands). Under 48 USC 10.1469a(d.ii.i), any department or agency may waive any requirement for matching funds otherwise required by law to be provided by the Insular Area involved. Insular Area applicants wishing to waive the match requirement must include a letter specifically requesting the match waiver.

All applicants should note that cost sharing is an element considered in Evaluation Criterion #4. "Project Costs." Match can come from a variety of public and private sources and can include in-kind goods and services such as private boat use and volunteer labor. Applicants are permitted to combine contributions from non-federal partners, as long as such contributions are not being used to match any other funds and are available within the project period stated in the application. Federal sources cannot be considered for matching funds, but can be described in the budget narrative to demonstrate additional leverage. Applicants are permitted to combine contributions from multiple non-federal partners in order to meet the 1:1 match recommendation, as long as such contributions are not being used to match any other funds. Applicants are also permitted to apply federally negotiated indirect costs in excess of federal share limits as described in Section IV.E.2. "Indirect Costs."

Applicants should also note that the following activities, in general, will not be considered as match under project awards: (1) Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state or Federal law; (2) activities that constitute restoration for natural resource damages under Federal, state or local law; and (3) activities that are required by a separate consent decree, court order, statute or regulation. However, the MDRPR Act allows the Administrator to authorize, as appropriate, the non-Federal share of the cost of a project to include money paid pursuant to, or the value of any in-kind service performed under, an administrative order on consent or judicial consent decree that will remove or prevent marine debris. Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding will be bound by the percentage of cost sharing reflected in the award document signed by the NOAA Grants Officer. Successful applicants should be prepared to carefully document matching contributions, including the names of participating volunteers and the overall number of volunteer or community participation hours devoted to individual marine debris partnerships. Letters of commitment for any secured resources expected to be used as match for an award should be submitted as an attachment to the application.

#### C. Other Criteria that Affect Eligibility

NOAA defines marine debris as any persistent solid material that is manufactured or processed and directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, disposed of or abandoned into the marine environment or the Great Lakes. (As published in the Federal Register on September 3, 2009.) Applications addressing other types of pollution not fitting the definition of marine debris will not be considered.

#### IV. Application and Submission Information

##### A. Address to Request Application Package

Complete application packages, including required Federal forms and instructions, and Supplemental Guidance for Prospective Applicants can be found on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If a prospective applicant is having difficulty downloading the application forms from Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

If an applicant does not have internet access, please contact Sarah Morison ([Sarah.Morison@noaa.gov](mailto:Sarah.Morison@noaa.gov)) at 301-713-2989. General information on the MDP can be found at <http://marinedebris.noaa.gov>.

##### B. Content and Form of Application

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply through the grants.gov website, [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the clearinghouse for Federal financial assistance. A complete standard NOAA grants application package should be submitted in accordance with the guidelines in this document. Each application should include:

###### 1) Required federal application forms, including:

- a) Application for Federal Assistance: SF-424 (9/03 version or newer)
- b) Budget Information, Non-construction Programs: SF-424A (one for each annual budget period)
- c) Assurances, Non-construction Programs: SF-424B
- d) Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, and other Responsibility Matters: Drug Free Workplace Environment: CD-511
- e) CD-512 (remains with applicant -do not submit as part of the application package)
- f) Disclosure of Lobbying Activities: SF-LLL (if applicable)

g) Applicant for Federal Assistance: CD-346, must be downloaded from the DOC Forms Library at <http://www.ago.noaa.gov/ago/grants/forms.cfm> (required for the following individuals: Non-profit Organizations, Sole Proprietorship, Partnerships, Corporations and Joint Venture).

2) A partnership summary (described below) (2 pages).

a) Applicant Organization

b) Partnership Title

c) Geographic Scope - state whether the partnership is national or regional, and what states and/or watersheds it will cover

d) Planning Framework - briefly describe any planning or prioritization framework the partnership may use to determine funding priorities

e) Partnership Identification - briefly describe the type of marine debris to be addressed (i.e. derelict fishing gear, land based litter, derelict and abandoned vessels), the targeted audience (e.g. K-12, fishing industry, teachers) and the prevention and/or outreach method(s) to be implemented. If sub-awards are part of the proposal, briefly describe the process that will be used to identify high quality projects, including a proposed timeline for solicitation, and implementation.

f) NOAA Trust Resources likely to benefit - briefly describe the partnership resource focus, any restrictions expected such as only certain habitat types, debris types, specific applicant/user groups, specific resource/habitat targets, etc.

g) Partnership Outputs/Outcomes - briefly describe the anticipated outputs and outcomes the Partnership may be expected to produce

h) Federal Funds Requested & Non-Federal Match Anticipated (including other Federal contributions that may help support the partnership)

i) Letters of Support (list those included with the application, particularly those from members of Congress)

3) A partnership narrative (described below) (10 pages).

The partnership narrative should closely follow the organization of the evaluation criteria (Section V.A.) for the application to receive a consistent review, and should include:

a) A narrative description should be no more than 10 pages long (in 12-point font with 1" margins; double-spaced type is preferred, but not required) that clearly demonstrates the broad-based benefits expected to living marine resources and/or navigation safety, and how these benefits will be achieved through the proposed partnership activities;

b) Specific problems the partnership will address, and the geographic area over which the partnership will operate;

c) The targeted audience;

d) A description of short- and long-term objectives and goals, the expected success of projects implemented under the partnership, and the relevance and significance of the proposed partnership to address marine debris to benefit living marine resources and/or navigations safety. If specific projects are identified in the application, the narrative should describe the history of these projects.

e) Proposed output and outcome measures that will be used to track the success of the partnership.

f) The anticipated partnership duration (between 12 and 36 months), the amount and timing of funds requested, potential sources of national/regional and local match, including cash match available at the national/regional level for supporting project sub-awards, and any restrictions the partner may impose on the further use of Federal funds. For example, if the partner anticipates designating funding for specific project phases, cost categories or to specific recipients, restricting habitat types, debris types, organization types or geographic locations from consideration, these limitations or restrictions should be clearly detailed in the narrative. It is NOAA's intention to maintain maximum competition and flexibility in the use of Federal marine debris prevention and outreach funds.

g) Should the project include field activities, a description of how partners will ensure that all necessary environmental permits and consultations are secured prior to the use of federal funds for implementing individual projects that may require permits and consultations, and how the necessary information will be provided to NOAA staff to enable them to make a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) determination for all projects.

h) Information on how the selection of any sub-projects under the partnership with NOAA will promote understanding of the issue of marine debris and keys to prevention, and describe how the partnership will be advanced or promoted.

i) A description of the organizational structure of the applicant, detail their

qualifications and identify proposed partnership staff. Anticipated project partners other than the applicant should be identified, and supporting documentation indicating their intent to participate and identifying their potential contributions should be included. This is particularly important for those applying to establish regional partnerships.

j) Inclusion of supplementary materials such as letters of support, planning documents, photographs, etc. is strongly encouraged and do not count toward the narrative page limit. All supplementary materials should be combined and submitted as one single file separate from the narrative. Applicants should not assume prior knowledge on the part of NOAA as to the relative merits of the partnership described in the application.

4) A detailed, narrative budget justification (described below) (2 pages/annual budget period).

Budgets must include a detailed breakdown by category of cost (object class) separated into federal and non-federal shares as they relate to specific aspects of the partnership, with appropriate justification for both the federal and non-federal shares. A separate SF-424A budget form should be used to break down multi-year budget requests into annual funding increments, and the budget justification should mirror the organization of the forms. Applicants are encouraged to include a budget table to further clarify the cost breakdown. Budget justifications should indicate if funding requests to support partnership activities have been submitted elsewhere, whether the funds requested are federal or non-federal, and what amount has been requested or secured from other sources to support partnership activities described in the application submitted to NOAA. The NOAA Grants Management Division will review budget information for recommended applications to determine if costs are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and realistic.

Applicants must itemize and describe the intended use of equipment costing \$5,000 or greater that will be purchased under the award. Applicants must complete a lease versus purchase analysis for any equipment \$5,000 or greater. The applicant, to the extent possible, is requested to state who will be requested to retain ownership of any equipment purchased through grant funds after the project ends.

Funding for salaries must also be used to support staff directly involved in accomplishing the work and should contain a detailed breakdown of personnel hours and

costs by task. Requests for salaries are expected to support Partnership staff with the proper qualifications and relevant skill sets to support the technical aspects of prevention and outreach such that NOAA staff augment and assist with project implementation rather than serve as the primary. The NOAA Marine Debris Program and Grants Management Division staff will review budget information for recommended applications to determine if costs are allowable, allocable, reasonable, and realistic. The narrative budget justification should be sufficiently detailed to enable a clear understanding of the cost breakdown and calculations used to come up with the line item totals in each object class of the 424A budget form.

5) The curriculum vitae or resume of primary project personnel.

6) Letters documenting support.

7) Waiver request letter, if applicable.

8) Other relevant attachments the applicant deems important to the overall understanding and evaluation of the proposed project, such as regional restoration planning documents or a site location map to indicate the geographic scope of the partnership.

Applications submitted through the grants.gov website should include only three files in addition to the Federal Application forms: 1) the project summary and narrative, 2) the budget justification, and 3) all other attachments combined, including resumes, national or regional plans, maps, and support letters, not to exceed 20 pages. PDF files are the preferred format; information about converting documents to PDF files is available on the grants.gov website.

PLEASE NOTE: Applications that exceed the page limits stated above may not be sent forward for review. Applications that do not comply with the page limit guidance do so at their own risk.

## Other Application Submission Information

Applicants are strongly encouraged to apply through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). It takes

approximately 3 weeks to register with [grants.gov](http://grants.gov), and registration is required only once. Applicants should consider the time needed to register with [grants.gov](http://grants.gov), and should begin the registration process well in advance of the application due date if they have never registered with [grants.gov](http://grants.gov). If [grants.gov](http://grants.gov) cannot reasonably be used, a hard copy application (signed in blue ink) may be submitted to the Marine Debris Program (see sub-section F. "Other Submission Requirements"). Paper applications should be printed on one side only and should not be bound in any manner. Applicants submitting paper applications should also include a full copy of the application on compact disc.

Potential applicants are invited to contact MDP staff before submitting an application to discuss the applicability of partnership ideas to the MDP's goals and objectives, and/or to request an application package that contains instructions for submitting NOAA standard grants applications and supplementary instructions specific to the MDP partnership competition.

### C. Submission Dates and Times

Full proposals must be received and validated by [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov), postmarked, or provided to a delivery service on or before 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on February 18, 2010. Please note: Validation or rejection of your application by [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) may take up to 2 business days after submission. Please consider this process in developing your submission timeline. Use of a delivery service must be documented with a receipt. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted.

### D. Intergovernmental Review

Funding applications under NOAA are subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." It is the state agency's responsibility to contact their state's Single Point of Contact (SPCO) to find out about and comply with the state's process under EO 12372. To assist the applicant, the names and addresses of the SPOCs are listed on the Office of Management and Budget's website



<<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html> >.

## E. Funding Restrictions

### 1. Allowable Costs

Funds awarded cannot necessarily pay for all the costs that the recipient might incur in the course of carrying out the partnership. Generally, costs that are allowable include salaries, equipment and supplies, as long as these are "necessary and reasonable" specifically for the purpose of the award. Allowable costs are determined by reference to the OMB Circulars A-122, 14 "Cost Principles for Non-profit Organizations"; A-21, "Cost Principles for Education Institutions"; A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments"; and Federal Acquisition Regulation, codified at 48 Code of Federal Regulations, subpart 31.2 "Contracts with Commercial Organizations." All cost reimbursement sub-awards (subgrants, subcontracts, etc.) are subject to those federal cost principles applicable to the particular type of organization concerned.

Pre-award costs are generally unallowable. A pre-award cost incurred before a notice of award document is provided by the NOAA Grants Office is at the applicant's own risk. Typically, the earliest date for receipt of partnership awards will be October 1, 2010. Applicants should consider this award timing when developing requested start dates for proposed restoration partnership activities. See 15 CFR Part 14 Section 14.25 for more information on pre-award costs.

### 2. Indirect Costs

The budget may include an amount for indirect costs if the applicant has an established indirect cost rate with the federal government. Indirect costs are essentially overhead costs for basic operational functions (e.g., lights, rent, water, insurance) that are incurred for common or joint objectives and therefore cannot be identified specifically within a particular partnership. For this solicitation, the federal share of the indirect costs must not exceed the lesser of either the indirect costs the applicant would be entitled to if the negotiated federal indirect cost rate were used or 25 percent of the direct costs proposed. For those situations in which the use of the applicant's indirect cost rate would result in indirect costs greater than

25 percent of the federal direct costs, the difference may be counted as part of the non-federal share.

A copy of the current, approved negotiated indirect cost agreement with the federal government should be included with the application. If the applicant does not have a current negotiated rate and plans to seek reimbursement for indirect costs, documentation necessary to establish a rate must be submitted within 90 days of receiving an award.

#### F. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants should submit applications electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). Users of Grants.gov will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it

off line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. If an applicant has problems downloading the application forms from Grants.gov, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

Do not wait until the application deadline to begin the application process through Grants.gov. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a DUNS number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). Applicants should allow a minimum of 5 days to complete the CCR registration; registration is required only once. After electronic submission of the application, applicants will receive an automatic acknowledgment from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be accompanied by two automated receipts of the date and time of submission (the first confirms receipt; the second confirms that there are no errors with an application submission and that the application has been forwarded to NOAA for further processing). If both notifications are not received, an applicant needs to follow up with both the Grants.gov helpdesk and the NOAA Restoration Center to confirm receipt of submission.

PLEASE NOTE: It may take Grants.gov up to two (2) business days to validate or reject the application. Please keep this in mind in developing your submission timeline. Applicants should allow themselves sufficient time to submit their application to Grants.gov in advance

of the deadline to ensure applications have been submitted successfully, as the deadline for submission cannot be extended. NOAA may request that you provide original signatures on forms at a later date.

If an applicant does not have internet access or grants.gov cannot be used, a hard copy application must be postmarked, or provided to a delivery service and documented with a receipt, by September 30, 2009 and sent to: NOAA Marine Debris Division, N/ORR, 1305 East West Highway, 10th Floor, Station 10204, Silver Spring, MD 20910. ATTN: Marine Debris Partnership Applications. Applications postmarked or provided to a delivery service after that time will not be considered for funding. Applications submitted via the U.S. Postal Service must have an official postmark; private metered postmarks are not acceptable. In any event, applications received later than 7 business days following the postmark closing date will not be accepted. No facsimile or electronic mail applications will be accepted. Paper applications should be printed on one side only, on 8.5" x 11" paper, and should not be bound in any manner. Applicants submitting paper applications must also include a full copy of the application as a single PDF file, including Federal forms, on a compact disc (CD).

Applications should be submitted via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov). If grants.gov cannot reasonably be used, applications must be postmarked, or provided to a

delivery service and documented with a receipt, by January 30 , 2010 and sent to:

ATTN: MD Prevention and Outreach Partnership Applications. NOAA Marine Debris Division (N/ORR), Office of Response and Restoration, N/ORR, 1305 East West Highway, 10th Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

## V. Application Review Information

### A. Evaluation Criteria

Technical reviewers will assign scores to proposals ranging from 0 to 100 points based

on the following five standard NOAA evaluation criteria and respective weights specified below.

1. Importance and/or relevance and applicability of proposed project to the program goals (20 points): This ascertains whether there is intrinsic value in the proposed work and/or relevance to NOAA, Federal, regional, State, or local activities. Questions related to this criterion include: Does the proposed partnership enhance regional or national collaboration to prevent the introduction of marine debris through education, outreach, development and dissemination of tools, or other prevention activities? Are the correct partners involved and does the proposed partnership utilize existing networks at the national or regional level? Proposals will be evaluated on how well the proposed project will achieve the specific goals of the announcement.

2. Technical and scientific merit (20 points): This criterion assesses whether the approach is technically sound and/or innovative, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear partnership goals and objectives. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Is the approach appropriate for the stated goals and objectives? Are the project goals and objectives achievable within the proposed time-frame and budget level? Does the proposed approach incorporate current guidance, scientific, and/or technical advancements in the design and implementation of the proposed work? Is the project innovative and/or does it provide unique and impactful outreach techniques?

3. Overall qualifications of the funding applicants (15 points): This criterion ascertains whether the funding applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Does the proposal demonstrate regional and institutional support for the project? Are the investigators qualified and is the organizational framework appropriate to coordinate and facilitate a partnership of the nature and scope proposed? Are investigators from other agencies and institutions within the region or nation included as key personnel on the project to capitalize on available expertise and promote a regional or national approach? Does the proposal utilize and/or highlight specific resources and expertise provided by the applicant?

4. Project costs (15 points). This criterion evaluates the budget to determine if it is realistic and commensurate with the project needs and time-frame. Questions relevant to

this criterion include: Does the proposal demonstrate that the budget is commensurate with partnership and project needs? Is the cost effectiveness of the partnership optimized through other strategic partnerships with collaborating institutions, agencies, or private sector partners?

5. Outreach and education (30 points): This criterion assesses whether the partnership leverages NOAA's capacity to foster long-time marine stewardship, and provides a focused and effective education and outreach strategy regarding NOAA's mission to address marine debris and protect living marine resources and navigation safety. Questions relevant to this criterion include: Does the proposal identify a target audience, and demonstrate that the target audience has been engaged in the development of the desired partnership outcomes? Does the proposal demonstrate that information generated by the partnership will reach its target audience and have a positive impact on preventing marine debris? Does the proposal aim to inspire behavior change in the target audience? Is the relationship between the debris type and target audience soundly established?

#### B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will be screened by MDP staff to determine if they are eligible, complete and in accordance with instructions detailed in the standard NOAA Grants Application Package.

Eligible applications for Marine Debris Prevention and Outreach Partnerships will be evaluated by at least three individual technical reviewers according to the criteria and weights described in this solicitation. Each reviewer will independently evaluate each project and provide an individual score. No consensus advice will be provided by these reviewers. Applications will likely be subject to a subsequent panel review.

If a panel review is not convened, the application ranking, technical review comments and scores will be provided to the Selecting Official (SO). If a panel is convened, the FFO, application ranking, top ranked applications, and technical review comments and scores will be provided to a panel whose members will not have participated as technical reviewers. The panel will be comprised of Federal employees, and may convene in person or by teleconference, video conference or other electronic means to discuss applications and consider technical reviewer comments. Prior to the panel discussion, each member of the panel will independently assign a numerical rating of either 0, 2 or 4 for each application, based on the degree to which each application addresses the evaluation criteria and program

priorities, according to the following scale:

0 Poor to Fair - not recommended for funding

2 Good - recommended for funding with modification once higher priorities are met

4 Excellent - recommended for funding and inclusion in top tier for definite consideration with available funds

Panel member scores will be averaged and an interim ranking will result which will be presented to the panel for discussion, with the goal of reaching consensus on the applications to be recommended for funding. After discussing the applications, panelists will again assign a numerical rating of 0, 2 or 4 (as described above) for each application, scores will be averaged, and a final project ranking developed. The final ranking from the panel will be presented to the SO and should be the primary consideration by the SO in deciding which applications will be recommended to the NOAA Grants Officer.

#### C. Selection Factors

The SO anticipates recommending applications for funding in rank order unless an application is justified to be selected out of rank order based upon one or more of the following selection factors:

- 1) Availability of funding;
- 2) Balance/distribution of funds: a) geographically, b) by type of institutions, c) by type of partners, d) by research areas; e) by project types;
- 3) Whether this project duplicates other projects funded or considered for funding by NOAA or other Federal agencies;
- 4) Program priorities and policy factors set out in section I.A. and I.B.;
- 5) An applicant's prior award performance;
- 6) Partnerships and/or participation of targeted groups; and
- 7) Adequacy of information necessary for NOAA staff to make a NEPA determination and draft necessary documentation before recommendations for funding are

made to the NOAA Grants Officer.

Hence, awards may not necessarily be made to the highest scored applications. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified that their application was not among those

recommended for funding. Unsuccessful applications submitted in hard copy will be kept on file until the selection process has been validated and approved by the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Law Division and then destroyed.

#### D. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates

Successful applicants generally will be identified by May 1, 2010. The earliest anticipated start date for projects will be October 1, 2010, dependent on the completion of all NOAA/applicant negotiations, NEPA analysis, and documentation supporting cooperative agreement activities. The start date on proposals should be on August 1, 2010; or the first day of any proceeding month after August 1, 2010, but no later than January 1, 2011.

### VI. Award Administration Information

#### A. Award Notices

Successful applicants may be asked to modify work plans or budgets, and provide supplemental information required by the agency prior to final approval of an award. The exact amount of funds to be awarded, the final scope of activities, the Partnership duration, and specific NOAA cooperative involvement with the activities of each Partnership will be determined in pre-award negotiations among the applicant, the NOAA Grants Office, and NOAA staff that will administer these restoration Partnership grants. Applicants that initiate Partnership activities in expectation of Federal funding do so at their own risk, and are advised not to begin until a notice of award document is received electronically from the NOAA Grants Management Division in Grants Online, NOAA's online grants management system.

#### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

##### 1. Administrative Requirements

Successful applicants that accept a NOAA award under this solicitation will be bound by Department of Commerce standard terms and conditions. This document will be provided in the award package in Grants Online, NOAA's online grants management system, and can be found at: [http://oamweb.ossec.doc.gov/gmd\\_updated-doc.html](http://oamweb.ossec.doc.gov/gmd_updated-doc.html).

In addition, award documents provided by the NOAA Grants Office in the Grants Online award package may contain special award conditions limiting the use of funds for activities that have outstanding environmental compliance requirements to fulfill, and/or stating other compliance requirements for the award as applicable, such as requirements for submitting progress reports consistent with the NOAA Restoration Center data form and narrative format approved by OMB under control number 0648-0472.

## 2. NEPA Requirements

NOAA must analyze the potential environmental impacts for individual outreach and prevention projects as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Detailed information on NOAA compliance with NEPA can be found at the following NOAA NEPA website: <http://www.nepa.noaa.gov/>, including NOAA Administrative Order 216-6 for NEPA, and the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) implementation regulations. Consequently, as part of an applicant's package, and under their description of their program activities, applicants are required to provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, safety concerns, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and any environmental concerns that may exist (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, aquaculture projects, and impacts to coral reef systems).

It is the Partners' responsibility to ensure that subawardees obtain all necessary Federal, state, and local government permits and approvals where necessary for the proposed work to be conducted. Sub award projects should be designed so that they minimize the potential for adverse impacts to the environment. Partners will be required to cooperate with NOAA in identifying feasible measures to reduce or avoid any identified adverse environmental impacts of their proposed sub award projects. The failure to agree to do so shall be grounds for not awarding a grant.

In most cases, applicants will not have identified specific projects to be funded as sub-awards under the proposed Partnership. Therefore, under each Partnership awarded, NOAA staff will review individual project proposals considered for sub-award funding for National Environmental Policy Act compliance on a project by project basis. Projects will be reviewed under NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216-6, Environmental Review Procedures for Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). NAO 216-6 is located at <http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/~nao/216-6.html>.



Successful Partnerships will need to ensure that project proposals considered for sub-award funding provide enough detail for NOAA to make a NEPA determination, and that funds will not be released until NOAA completes necessary NEPA documentation. Successful applicants are encouraged to consult with NOAA as early as possible on projects considered for sub-awards to obtain guidance with respect to the level and scope of information needed by NOAA to comply with NEPA. A phased approach may be recommended and funds withheld by the Grants Officer under a special award condition requiring the recipient to submit additional environmental law compliance information sufficient to enable NOAA to make an assessment on any impacts that a Partnership project may have on the environment.

Applicants proposing activities that cannot be categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis will be informed after the technical review stage and may be requested to assist in the preparation of an EA prior to an award being made, or provide for NOAA review a copy of an EA that covers proposed activities if one exists.

#### C. Reporting

Successful applicants will be required to submit progress and financial reports semi-annually that cover 6-month periods as indicated in the award documentation provided by GMD. Progress reports are due to NOAA no later than 30 days after each 6-month project period. A final report is due no later than 90 days after the expiration date of an award. Progress reports should detail Partnership activities that have occurred at the national or regional level during the reporting period that correspond with goals and objectives identified in the narrative, as well as provide specific, project-related information.

Financial reports cover the periods from October 1 - March 31 (due by April 30) and April 1 - September 30 (due by October 30).

## VII. Agency Contacts

For further information contact Sarah Morison at 301-713-2989, or by fax 301-713-4389, or via e-mail at < Sarah.Morison@noaa.gov >.

#### VIII. Other Information

After electronic submission of the application through Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will receive within the next 24 to 48 hours two e-mail messages from Grants.gov updating them on the progress of their application. The first e-mail will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system prior to transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected due to errors. After the application has been validated, this same person will receive another e-mail when the application has been downloaded by the federal agency.

Official notification of an award notice is provided by the Grants Management Division, not the program office.

If one incurs any costs prior to receiving an award agreement from an authorized NOAA grant official, one would do so solely at one's own risk of these costs not being included under the award.

The NOAA Marine Debris Program will not release the names of applicants submitting proposals unless ordered by a court or requested to do so by an appropriate NOAA official and administrative protocol. Applicants can use a NOAA public search feature to find out information about NOAA awards  
<<https://grantsonline.rdc.noaa.gov/flows/publicSearch/begin.do;jsessionid=GbZDVT7JqmXqNlm84y2DBn5CpmGR2vJvQKfnX5CLd94YvywZQTZq!-1742093309>> or go through the Freedom of Information Act process to request more information about grant competitions. More information about the NOAA FOI process is on-line at

< <http://www.rdc.noaa.gov/~foia/> >.

Successful applicants will be requested to ensure that all interim progress reports indicate whether financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's Grants Management Division and are up-to-date. Applicants in their final progress report will be asked to a) clearly state the resulting impact of their project and products in the community; and b) certify that Final financial reports have been submitted to NOAA's Grants Management

Division and a final funding draw-down has been made through the Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP).

If equipment was purchased with grant funds or obtained from a federal agency, applicants may be asked to submit an equipment inventory as an appendix to interim and final progress reports. The equipment inventory should include all equipment including its fair market value. If current fair market value of a piece of equipment is \$5,000 or greater and the title of that equipment is intended to be transferred to another entity at the end of the project, then the recipient must request approval to transfer title of the equipment. NOAA will respond within 120 days with instructions for disposition. Equipment disposition instructions typically require that recipients file complete an "other" award action request in Grants Online. The program office recommends this type of award action request be submitted approximately 150 days before the project period ends to allow sufficient time to have equipment disposition requests addressed before a project period ends.

Please be advised that potential funding applicants must register with Grants.gov before any application materials can be submitted. An organization's one time registration process may take up to three weeks to complete so please allow sufficient time to ensure applications are submitted before the closing date. To use Grants.gov, applicants must have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and be registered in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). Allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration. (Note: Your organization's Employer Identification Number (EIN) will be needed on the application form.)

The Grants.gov site contains directions for submitting an application, the application package (forms), and is also where the completed application is submitted. Applicants using Grants.gov must locate the downloadable application package for this solicitation by the Funding Opportunity Number or the CFDA number (11.463). Applicants will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it off line, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site.

The Department of Commerce Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements contained in the Federal Register notice of February 11, 2008 (73 FR 7696) are applicable to this solicitation.

In no event will NOAA or the Department of Commerce be responsible for preparation costs if programs fail to receive funding or are cancelled because of other agency priorities. Publication of this announcement does not oblige NOAA to award any specific Partnership or to obligate any available funds.

Prior notice and an opportunity for public comment are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553 (a) (2)) or by any other law for this document concerning grants, benefits, and contracts. Because notice and opportunity for comment are not required pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553 or any other law, the analytical requirements of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) are not applicable. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis has not been prepared.

This action has been determined to be not significant for purposes of Executive Order 12866 (Regulatory Impact Review).

The use of the standard NOAA grant application package referred to in this notice involves collection-of-information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The use of Standard Forms 424, 424A, 424B, SF-LLL, and CD-346 have been approved by OMB under the respective control numbers 0348-0043, 0348-0044, 0348-0040, 0348-0046, and 0605-0001.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection displays a currently valid OMB control number.